

MILWAUKEE COUNTY COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Deb Falk-Palec, Chairperson
Tim Ochnikowski, Director
December 14, 2015

MINUTES

St. John's Properties
1800 N. Prospect Ave
1:00 PM

ITEM I CALL TO ORDER

Chair Falk-Palec called the December meeting of the Commission for Persons with Disabilities to order at 1:02pm.

ITEM II ROLL CALL

Chair Falk-Palec led the self-introductions of everyone in attendance.

Commissioners Present: Deb Falk-Palec, John Haupt, Denise Koss, Cheri Mc Grath, Marcia Perkins, Meg Steimle

Commissioners Absent or Excused: Luis Arroyo, Tom Jacobs, Supervisor Willie Johnson, Jr., Barbara Leigh, Susan Pickering, Andrzej Walz-Chojnacki, Kathryn Zalewski

Staff: Mike Bonk, Tim Ochnikowski

Guests: Camille Draheim – 2015 Eric Hobbs Award Winner, Tracy Harrington – MTS

ITEM III APPROVAL OF MINUTES (November)

Commissioner Steimle moved to approve the November minutes. Hearing no discussion, Chair Falk-Palec accepted the minutes as written.

ITEM IV SPECIAL REPORT

Ms. Draheim presented her Award Winning Art piece, All Day Everyday to the group. Ms. Draheim described her inspiration on the painting came from a family wedding in Florida. Ms. Draheim continued to give an overview of her inspiration on the artwork as well, as her background on how she got involved in art, and the things she is currently working on. Chair Falk-Palec thanked Ms. Draheim for coming, and discussed the need to come up with a location to display the award winning piece. Commissioners gave a brief discussion, and decided it would be best to discuss this at the next commission meeting in January and make it an official agenda item for January.

ITEM V TRANSIT PLUS REPORT

Ms. Harrington explained that the Barrier Removal will continue into 2016. The employee who previously handled the Barrier Removal Program left MCTS and they are looking at restricting that position. In addition the funding for the Barrier Removal Program has changed from the New Freedom Program to a Federal Grant 5310. Ms. Harrington also reported that video cameras are being installed onto Transit vehicles. Ms. Harrington also reported that Sue Chase would no longer be a travel trainer for 2016. MCTS is committed to continuing the travel training process that is free for everyone to use. Commissioner McGrath mentioned the amount of savings that riders with disabilities save by using the New Freedom program taking the bus instead of using Transit Plus vehicles, and thinks that an article or editorial should be written and sent to the local media for distribution on how people with disabilities are saving the tax payers a lot of money. The Commission decided to draft a letter and will be sent around by email to seek feedback from the entire commission in hopes of distributing the letter.

ITEM VI COMMITTEE UPDATES

ITEM VII REVIEW OFFICE REPORT (November)

Sue Chase will be leaving her role in the Office for Persons with Disabilities, and will now be transferring to a Human Resources role where she will continue to work on the return to work programs, make employee accommodations, and will manage the FMLA program for Milwaukee County. Commissioner McGrath brought up concerns of the Office for Persons with Disabilities being eliminated, and asked if there was anything the commission could do to help during this time of transition. Chair Falk-Palec suggested the office could get a volunteer or intern to help alleviate some of the offices duties.

Mr. Ochnikowski then presented a floor plan, and described the work that will be completed in 2016 at Wil-O-Way Underwood.

ITEM VIII COMMISSION DISCUSSIONS

Recreation Updates

Commissioners congratulated Mr. Bonk on having his third child. Mr. Bonk provided an update to the Recreational Contract. The Contract with Easter Seals was extended one year, in order to continue programming as well as evaluate what type of programs will be best suited when requesting an RFP for 2017-2019. Mr. Bonk indicated that there some changes starting 2016 in which there will be an emphasis on community based recreation, and still continue the recreation programs occurring at the Wil-O-Way facilities. In the 2016 model, programs at Wil-O-Way Grant will be held on Mondays and Wednesdays, and Wil-O-Way Underwood will host programs on Tuesdays and Thursdays which should help alleviate some staffing costs. Dances will continue be held at the Wil-O-Ways on alternating Fridays at each of the Wil-O-Way Facilities while in session. There has been an increase in demand for community based programming, and community based activities such as going out to dinners, and movies, as well as utilizing other county attractions(museums, domes, etc.).

There will also be some changes in the Summer Camps at the Wil-O-Way facilities in 2016. Summer Camp families explained through surveys that there was a need to extend camp for the working families as they need more respite for their relatives while working. This year there will be 3 three week sessions for a total of 9 weeks of Summer Camp focusing on younger individuals. In addition there will be a 1 week camp provided for adults ages 18 and up prior to the 9 week summer camp. Previously our summer camps were only 6 weeks, with an option for an extended 2 week camp.

Mr. Bonk also provided an update regarding the Wil-O-Way Key Card Program in that the number of individuals taking advantage of this program is around 300 individuals. Mr. Bonk indicated that there will be more incentives for the next year to become a Wil-O-Way Key Card Member as there will be special events held at the Wil-O-Ways that will be free to Key Card Members, but individuals who are not Key Card Members will have to pay to attend. In addition Mr. Bonk indicated all of the benefits of being a Key Card Member by receiving 4 free tickets to every Milwaukee Admirals game, 1 free ticket to Milwaukee Bucks games, and discounted tickets to the Milwaukee Wave & Brewers.

Chair Persons Report

Chair Falk-Palec provided an update on the status of Bublr Bikes indicating that Wauwatosa spent \$350,000 on new bikes, none of which were accessible. Chair Falk-Palec stated that 4 members of the council voted against due to there not being any accessible options. Commission discussed the ADA issues, and there has been no federal guidance on this issue yet. Commissioners also discussed funding of the bikes and transit funds. Disabilities Rights Wisconsin is looking into this issue as well. Mr. Bonk also indicated that he believes there is a demand for the bikes as he saw over 1500 positives review on a 3 wheel bike indicated many of the reviews came from persons with disabilities, but people of all abilities enjoyed this type of bike.

ITEM IX OTHER MATTERS BY COMMISSIONERS

ITEM X OTHER MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

ITEM XI ADJOURN

Chair Falk-Palec adjourned the meeting at 2:30pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be Monday, January 11, 2016 at 1:00pm at St. John's Properties (1800 N. Prospect Ave, Milwaukee).

Submitted by: Mike Bonk, Staff to the Commission